

About Annexation

What is Annexation? Annexation sounds like a complicated, technical term, but its meaning is really quite simple. Annexation is the process by which a city adds land to its jurisdiction, in order to extend its services, laws, voting privileges and better meet the needs of those residents living in the annexed area.

Why does Wichita Annex? In many cases, the landowner, the developer who built your neighborhood, or perhaps your neighbors, asked to be annexed into the City of Wichita to receive city water and sewer service.

In other cases, you are being annexed because your property is located in the natural path of growth for Wichita. Bringing your property inside the City limits allows for simplified boundaries, better planning and development and makes it easier to provide services in an efficient, affordable manner.

Whether a neighborhood is technically part of the City of Wichita, or sits just outside the city limits, we are all part of the same community. That sense of community is one of our area's strongest assets. Annexation is really nothing more than the official joining together of what in reality is already connected.

This brochure has been prepared to answer the most commonly asked questions about annexation to Wichita. However, the financial impact of annexation on individual properties cannot be determined without knowing the particular details of a property's location and assessed value. Therefore, this brochure should not be used to estimate changes in taxes resulting from annexation.

Different Types of Annexation

There are basically two types of annexation: **"requested" annexations and "unilateral" annexations.**

Requested Annexations most commonly occur when a property owner, whose land touches the City, petitions to be annexed. If their land does not touch the City, County approval would also be required in order for the City to "island" annex the property.

Unilateral Annexations occur when a municipality wishes to annex land without the prior permission of the property owner. State law outlines the criteria for unilateral annexation by a municipality, and specifies the annexation procedures that must be followed by the municipality. This includes notification of affected property owners, at least one public hearing and the preparation of a municipal services plan.

Timeframes for Processing Annexations

- Requested annexations can take about four to eight weeks to process and approve. No notification of neighbors is required.
- "Island" annexations take about three months. No notification is required.
- Unilateral annexations usually take several months depending on the number of parcels involved. Notification is given to all property owners who are to be annexed.

Frequently Asked Questions

WHAT IS THE BENEFIT OF ANNEXATION TO PROPERTY OWNERS? The greatest benefit is in the type and quality of services that can be

provided by the City. Services available include: quality drinking water, public sewers, stormwater and drainage improvements; enhanced police and fire protection; road construction, repair and maintenance; and housing, litter and nuisance code enforcement. Another benefit is the cost savings to residents who receive these services at a lower cost per person because of a greater pool of tax revenues.

Being a part of Wichita also allows residents to be served by such citizen-responsive programs as the community policing program, free street lighting if wanted, park and recreation services and various types of housing assistance. Fire insurance ratings are also more favorable for residents of Wichita than for residents in unincorporated areas.

Some services could initially remain unchanged for residents, e.g. fire response times (due to first responder agreement between Wichita and Sedgwick County Fire District No. 1).

WILL MY TAXES GO UP? Generally, taxes can be expected to increase with annexation to any city. Annexation will add a city levy to the owner's tax bill. However, in return, the property is relieved of township, fire district and South Central Kansas Library levies. Special assessments for watersheds, drainage, sewers, cemeteries, and improvement districts remain. Despite being the largest city in Kansas, Wichita has one of the lowest total mill levy rates in Sedgwick County as well as the state.

One of the advantages to being in Wichita is that the costs of main sewer and water line extensions are shared with the rest of the community. Wichita residents pay lower monthly bills for water service than customers living outside the City, and Wichita water and sewer rates are lower than those of other cities.

The City also has a stormwater utility which is designed to raise money to pay for drainage improvements. A residence pays \$1.21 per month while commercial establishments pay based on the amount of impervious (paved) surface on the property.

WILL THE ZONING OF MY PROPERTY CHANGE? Upon annexation, the zoning of your property automatically changes from residential classes: RR (rural residential), SF-20 or SF-10 (single-family) **to SF-6 (single-family), with the option for SF-10 (single-family) if requested by the property owner and approved by the City Council.** Other, higher intensity zoning classes will not change.

WILL ANNEXATION CHANGE THE SCHOOL DISTRICT THAT MY PROPERTY FALLS WITHIN? School district boundaries are established by State Statute, independent of municipal boundaries. Annexation of your property will not change the school district in which you are located.

WHEN WILL SEWER AND WATER SERVICE BE AVAILABLE? Unless there is an immediate health hazard or court order to install sewer or water lines, such services will not be installed until the majority of the property owners request them. Properties owners can do so by submitting a petition to the City's Public Works Engineering Division. The City will calculate the expected total cost and the cost shares of the property owners. As an affected property owner, you would pay for those costs. A public hearing will be held to determine if and how the services lines will be installed.

WHO IS GOING TO TAKE CARE OF MY STREETS? Once annexed to Wichita, the City's Public Works Maintenance Division is responsible for street maintenance and repair. If your

local street is unpaved and you would like to see it paved, you would follow a petition process similar to that for water and sewer service (affected property owners pay for this improvement).

HOW DOES ANNEXATION AFFECT LICENSING OF MY DOGS? Once annexed into the City of Wichita, dog licenses must be renewed (when expired) with the City.

CAN I CONTINUE TO USE MY PROPERTY AS A BUSINESS? If your business was lawfully established with the proper county zoning, the same zoning continues in the city, and you may continue the business use. If the business was established before county zoning existed, (in 1958 in some areas and 1985 in others), then you may continue as a legal non-conforming use ("grandfathered").

WHAT ARE THE RULES REGARDING MOBILE HOMES? The only place you may have a mobile home in Wichita is in a mobile home park. There is no age limit for the home. You may, however, have a manufactured home in residential districts if it is a "double-wide" unit, built to the 1976 HUD code and is on a permanent foundation. In the county, mobile homes may be located on most rural lots, but they must be no older than 1974 models.

WHAT IF I HAVE HORSES OR FARM ANIMALS? Up to two horses may be kept with an Animal Maintenance Permit. Additional horses and other farm animals, except hogs, are allowed in residential areas with limits on their numbers and with distance separation from neighbors. Please contact the Wichita-Sedgwick County Health Department for further information.

WHERE CAN I GET A BUSINESS LICENSE OR BUILDING PERMIT? Building permits are issued by the Office of Central Inspection on the 7th floor in City Hall. Business license applications are made through the License Office at the City Hall Express on the first floor of City Hall.

WHO WILL BE MY CITY COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE? There are six council districts in Wichita. To find out which district you fall within, if annexed, and who your representative would be, contact the City Council Office at 268-4331.

WHOM DO I NOTIFY IF I OBJECT TO BEING ANNEXED? A formal public hearing is held to allow all affected property owners the opportunity to express their comments, either verbally or in writing, to the Mayor and City Council. For unilateral annexations, affected property owners receive official notification of the time, place and date of such hearing. An information meeting is held prior to the formal hearing date to allow these property owners opportunity to discuss annexation issues with City staff.

For More Information

Contact the Wichita - Sedgwick County Metropolitan Area Planning Department on the 10th floor, in City Hall at 455 N. Main, Wichita, KS, 67202, or call the office at (316) 268-4421, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., M-F.

Addition information is available at the City's website: www.wichitagov.org.

Agency Contacts

The following contacts can provide more specific answers to your questions.

City Hall Express (Business Licenses, Dog Licenses)	268-4553
Clean Team (Blight, Graffiti, Gangs)	268-4481
Community Policing (Substations)	
East	688-9331
West	941-0673
North	688-9500
South	337-9200
Emergency (Police, Fire, EMS)	911
Fire Department (Administration)	268-4451
Law Department	268-4681
Office of Central Inspection (Building Permits, Housing Code Enforcement)	268-4481
Parks and Recreation	268-4361
Public Works: Engineering (New Roads, Water & Sewer)	268-4501
Public Works: Maintenance (Road Repairs & Maintenance)	268-4083
Public Works: Stormwater	268-4498
Water & Sewer Department (System Planning)	268-4555
Water & Sewer Department (Water Bills)	265-1300
Wichita - Sedgwick County Health Department (Trash, Weeds/Mowing, Hazardous Wastes, Animals)	268-8351

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PLANNING
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